

Message Text

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TAGS: EAIR, US, UR

SUBJ: CIVAIR: BILATERAL TALKS, CHARTER PROGRAMS AND WORLD AIRWAYS

REF: (A) STATE 239146; (B) STATE 236855; (C) MOSCOW 14338;

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1. AS DEPARTMENT SUGGESTED REFTEL A, ON OCTOBER 9 ECON COUNSELOR DISCUSSED WORLD AIRWAYS CHARTER PROGRAM WITH CIVIL AVIATIONS MINISTRY OFFICIALS ALONG LINES INDICATED. V.D. SAMORUKHOV OF MINISTRY NOTED THAT SEPTEMBER 25 CAB DECISION HAD CAUSED CANCELLATION OF AEROFLOT'S PLANNED CHICAGO-MOSCOW, SAN FRANCISCO-MOSCOW, DETROIT-MOSCOW, NEW ORELANS-LENINGRAD AND LOS ANGELES-MOSCOW CHARTERS, IN ALL TEN CHARTER FLIGHTS BETWEEN NOW AND END OF YEAR. SAMORUKHOV READ ALOUD LETTER MINISTRY HAD APPROVED FOR TRANSMISSION FROM AEROFLOT TO CAB CHAIRMAN LAST FRIDAY. LETTER EXPRESSED STRONG DISAPPOINTMENT OVER DENIAL AND, REFERRING TO PRINCIPLE OF RECIPROCITY MENTIONED BY CAB, SUGGESTED THAT IF CAB FOUND ITSELF UNABLE TO RECONSIDER QUESTION, AEROFLOT WOULD FEEL CONSTRAINED TO ASK SOVIET CIVIL AVIATIONS MINISTRY TO CANCEL COMPARABLE AGREED-UPON PAN AM OFF-ROUTE CHARTER FLIGHTS.

2. RETURNING TO WORLD AIRLINES QUESTION, SAMORUKHOV REPEATED SOVIET TACK THAT MINISTRY CANNOT APPROVE

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CHARTER FLIGHTS PROPOSED FOR PERIOD AFTER CURRENT

CHARTER AGREEMENT EXPIRES. HE NOTED, HOWEVER, THAT IF AGREEMENT CAN BE REACHED FOR RENEWAL OF CHARTER UNDERSTANDING DURING FORTHCOMING BILATERAL TALKS, MINISTRY WILL BE WILLING TO RECONSIDER WA APPLICATION IMMEDIATELY AFTERWARD.

3. REGARDING INVITATION TO BEGIN BILATERAL TALKS WASHINGTON NOVEMBER 17, SAMORUKHOV SAID SOVIETS WILL ACCEPT. WHILE THEY HAD HOPED TO HOST THIS ROUND OF TALKS IN MOSCOW, THEY UNDERSTAND THAT TIME PRESSURES ON US GROUP MAKES THIS INCONVENIENT. SOVIETS WOULD APPRECIATE LEARNING IDENTITY OF US DELEGATION MEMBERS. WHILE COMPOSITION OF SOVIET DEL NOT YET FIXED, GROUP WILL INCLUDE AEROFLOT REP TOGETHER WITH MINISTRY PEOPLE.

4. REFERRING TO OCTOBER 3 ARMITAGE-VASEV CONVERSATION AND NON-PAPER, WHICH HE HELD, SAMORUKHOV EXPRESSED APPRECIATION FOR US OFFER TO CONSIDER ALTERNATIVE SOVIET FREQUENCY PROPOSAL FOR PERIOD AFTER OCTOBER 31 AND SAID SOVIETS WOULD BE PROPOSING THAT AEROFLOT OPERATE THREE FLIGHTS PER WEEK BETWEEN NOVEMBER 1 AND BEGINNING OF JANUARY AS OUTLINED IN JUNE INTERLINE AGREEMENT. HE MENTIONED POINTEDLY THAT US READINESS TO LOOK FAVORABLY ON THIS REQUEST WOULD BE SEEN BY SOVIETS AS SIGNIFICANT MANIFESTATION OF GOOD WILL IN CONNECTION WITH UPCOMING BILATERAL NEGOTIATIONS.

5. ASKED WHAT HE ENVISIONED AS AGENDA FOR NOVEMBER TALKS, SAMORUKHOV LISTED (A) INTERLINE THREE-YEAR PROGRAM AGREEMENT, (B) CHARTER AGREEMENT RENEWAL, (C) WAYS OF EFFECTUATING THE CONSULTATION ALREADY PROVIDED FOR IN EXISTING AGREEMENT, (C) TRAFFIC RIGHTS, (E) STAFFING LEVELS FOR LOCAL OFFICES AND (F) ANY NEW QUESTIONS EITHER PARTY MIGHT WISH TO RAISE.

6. COMMENT - SAMORUKHOV AND COLLEAGUES APPARENTLY SHARE EMBASSY'S CONCERN THAT RECIPROCAL CANCELLATIONS OF CHARTER FLIGHTS COULD EASILY POISON ATMOSPHERE PRIOR TO BEGINNING OF NEGOTIATIONS. DEPARTMENT MAY WISH TO ADVISE CAB THAT INITIAL SOVIET REFERENCES TO BILATERAL LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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TALKS HINT AT SOVIET READINESS TO FACILITATE AGREEMENT ON EXTENSION OF CHARTER ACCORD AND THUS PERMIT SOVIETS TO REVIEW WA APPLICATION AFTER WASHINGTON TALKS WITHOUT LOSING FACE. WHILE VEILED THREAT TO CANCEL PAN AM'S OFF-ROUTE CHARTERS IN RETALIATION FOR CAB ACTIONS MAY HAVE BEEN CONVERSATION PLOY (WE TOLD SAMORUKHOV THAT SUCH ACTION WOULD BE EXTREMELY UNHELPFUL AND WOULD UNAVOIDABLY ENGENDER STRONGLY NEGATIVE ATTITUDE TOWARD

AEROFLOT'S FORTHCOMING FREQUENCY REQUEST) THERE WOULD
UNDOUBTELDY BE SUBSTANTIAL SUPPORT FOR SUCH ACTION FROM
MINISTRY OFFICIALS WHO ARE SENSITIVE TO IMAGINARY AS
WELL AS ACTUAL REBUFFS. AS MATTERS STAND, SAMORUKHOV
AND COLLEAGUES CLEARLY FEEL THAT US AUTHORITIES' DELAY
ON INITIATING BILATERAL TALKS THROUGHOUT SUMMER MONTHS
CONSTITUTES SNUB AND THAT JUSTIFICATION OF DELAY BY
CITING NEED TO STUDY SUMMER TRAFFIC LEVELS WAS FLIMSY.
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